

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the official action that issued in the present application on March 5, 2008. Claims 1, 2, and 8 were pending in the application. In the official action, claims 1, 2, and 8 were rejected. In this Amendment, claims 1, 2, and 8 have been amended, and new claims 9 and 10 have been added. Claims 1, 2, and 8-10 thus remain for consideration.

Applicants submit that claims 1, 2, and 8-10 are in condition for allowance and request withdrawal of the rejections in light of the following remarks.

§103 Rejections

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mouri (U.S. Patent No. 5,799,094) in view of Matsuo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,553,121).

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mouri in view of Matsuo in further view of McGrath (U.S. Patent No. 6,259,795).

Applicants submit that the independent claims (claims 1 and 2) are patentable over Mouri, Matsuo, and McGrath (collectively "the cited references").

Applicants' invention as recited in the independent claims is directed toward an audio reproducing apparatus. Claim 1 recites "a distributing unit for receiving input audio signals ... including at least a first channel signal, a second channel signal, a third channel signal, a fourth channel signal, and a fifth channel signal." Claim 1 further recites that "said distributing unit processes said fifth channel signal to produce combined signals of [at least four] channels by respectively adding said fifth channel signal to at least said first channel signal, said second channel signal, said third channel signal, and said fourth channel signal." (Emphasis supplied.) Claim 2 includes similar recitations. Supporting disclosure for the



emphasized recitation can be found in the specification at, for example, Fig. 13.

The cited references do not disclose the emphasized recitation. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 1 and 2 are patentable over the cited references - taken either individually or in combination - on at least this basis.

Further, since dependent claims inherit the limitations of their respective base claims, Applicants believe that dependent claims 8-10 are patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as discussed in connection with the independent claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (908) 654-5000.

The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account No. 12-1095.

The Examiner's consideration of this matter is gratefully acknowledged.

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Respectfully submitted,

By



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